

BREEDING BIRD COMMUNITY EFFECTS OF BIG GAME HABITAT ENHANCEMENT IN LODGEPOLE AND PONDEROSA PINE FORESTS ^{1WS}

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Point counts and cursory habitat surveys are being used to describe bird communities in forest stands being treated to increase forage production for big game. Our primary objectives are to describe and compare the presence, frequency and relative abundance of breeding species to habitat features in treated and untreated stands in order that we might better plan future efforts to meet a broader range of wildlife needs. Small (<8 ha) timber sale units in seral lodgepole pine/western larch stands along Hungry Horse Reservoir

(Flathead NF) are being harvested and burned to produce shrubfields for elk forage production. Paired treatment/control points are being surveyed with 4 replicate counts per year. These units are primarily seed-tree or shelterwood cuts with retention of larger Douglas-fir, larch, and snags. We have collected 2 years of data, primarily pre- and immediately post-treatment. Along Lake Koocanusa (Kootenai NF), we are sampling in >100 larger (10-150 ha) treatment units of various (pre- and post-treatment) ages. These are

primarily in ponderosa pine/
Douglas-fir stands treated through
combinations of overstory and
understory removal and prescribed fire.
Study design will allow comparison of
the trade-offs between 5- and 10-min
point counts, and 1-4 replications. This

monitoring work is part of our wildlife
mitigation package for the habitat losses
at these two hydroelectric facilities. We
hope to add a nesting/ production
component to this project within the
next 2 years.